THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) India and the USA have agreed on the text of a bilateral 'Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy'.

(b) The Agreement is the result of five rounds of negotiations, which took place between June, 2006 and July, 2007.

(c) The outcome of the discussions is the final text that has been agreed to the mutual satisfaction of both Governments. It reflects the political understandings and commitments of 18 July, 2005 and 2 March, 2006 and the basic principles listed in the statement of Prime Minister in Parliament on August 17, 2006.

American warship in Indian Ocean

†498. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the purpose behind the arrival of America's warship in Indian Ocean near Chennai;

(b) whether the purpose was fulfilled;

(c) whether it was opposed;

(d) whether long time ago the Russian ship also came on Indian seashore;

(e) whether it was opposed at that time also; and

(f) whether there are threat of nuclear ill-effects from these ships?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) USS Nimitz, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier ship of the US Navy, accompanied by another US Navy ship USS Pinckney, made a port call at Chennai port for a crew rest and relaxation visit on July 2-5, 2007.

(c) Some sections of the society demonstrated their opposition to the visit of the USS Nimitz.

(d) Russian naval ships visited Indian ports in 2003 and 2005 for joint naval exercises.

(e) No, Sir. Such goodwill visits are routinely undertaken by navies of friendly countries and India to enhance mutual cooperation and friendship.

(f) No. The presence of nuclear powered ships *per se* does not pose a threat of nuclear ill-effects from the ship.

Construction of roadway to Mount Everest

†499. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that China has announced construction of roadway till Mount Everest;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any assessment has been made by India as to the repercussions of construction of this road; and

(d) if so, the assessment thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government have seen media reports stating that China plans to construct a highway on Mount Everest so as to facilitate the carriage of the Olympic torch to various places in the People's Republic of China as part of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. According to these reports, construction would be completed in four months at an estimated cost of US$ 19.7 million.

(c) and (d) Government keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's national interests and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

Changing of LoC into Line of Peace

†500. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the reaction of Government of Pakistan to the statement given by the Prime Minister to change the Line of Control into Line of Peace ;

(b) Government's view-point on the proposal passed by the Indian Parliament that the land of Kashmir occupied by Pakistan would be taken back; and

(c) whether Government believe that terrorists from across LoC would not come here after Line of Control is changed into Line of Peace?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 16 July, 2007 *inter alia* said that the Indian Prime Minister's statement acknowledged that both countries are seriously discussing Kashmir.

(b) and (c) Government's policy on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is in accordance with the Parliament Resolution of February 22, 1994. The President of Pakistan had, in the Joint Press Statement of January 6, 2004 assured the Prime Minister of India that he would not allow any territory under Pakistan's control to support terrorism in any manner.

Security of Indian women and temples in Malaysia

†501. SHRI SHRIGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian women and temples in Malaysia are increasingly becoming insecure;

† Notice of the question was received in Hindi.